

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Northern leopard frogs were documented at Murtaugh Lake, Twin Falls County; eight sites along Lake Walcott in Cassia and Blaine Counties; at a marsh east of Gifford Springs in Power County; Daniels Reservoir in Oneida County; and at Hawkins Reservoir, Bannock County. Lake Walcott harbors a number of small bays and emergent wetlands suitable for leopard frogs. Leopard frogs appeared to be relatively common at Daniels and Hawkins Reservoirs. Both Daniels and Hawkins Reservoirs are popular with fishermen; the former is managed by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game as a trophy trout fishery.
2. Leopard frogs were not documented at the Snake River Resource Area's upper Raft River riparian exclosure site in southern Cassia County despite multiple visits, and despite their presence in 1992.
3. Long term leopard frog monitoring surveys should be established at one or more of the above sites beginning in 1998.
4. Additional leopard frog surveys along Lake Walcott and the Snake River, in cooperation with the Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge and/or interested private landowners, would further facilitate assessment of the species' current distribution in southcentral Idaho. Identification of bays and emergent wetlands, via National Wetland Inventory maps or aerial photographs, could provide a relatively complete inventory of suitable search areas.
5. Surveys of historic leopard frog localities should continue, encompassing upper and lower Salmon Falls Canyon, the Snake River Canyon and Blue Lakes area near Twin Falls, and Deep Creek east of Rogerson (Twin Falls County); Cassia Creek and the Raft River (Cassia County); St. John's Reservoir (Oneida County); and Lake Channel (Power County).
6. Given that the preponderance of leopard frog sightings in this study occurred at various southern Idaho reservoirs, surveys of Stone, Devil Creek and Deep Creek Reservoirs in Oneida County, should also be considered.
7. Additional baseline amphibian surveys are warranted at Wilson Reservoir, Jerome County and North Cottonwood Reservoir, Twin Falls County, to establish the presence of western toads and tiger salamanders, respectively.
8. Based on conversations with several long-time residents, chemicals including xylene and acrolein, used routinely to control aquatic vegetation in irrigation waterways, have allegedly resulted in local frog mortalities in the past. Current use of these chemicals, as well as copper sulfate, are likely a primary factor in limiting the distribution of frogs in these water systems today.

9. The inclusion of privately-owned wetlands associated with southern Idaho reservoirs and the Snake River corridor will likely be essential to the success of conservation planning for leopard frogs in southcentral Idaho. However, in attempting to secure permission to access certain lands during the course of this study, it became apparent that some landowners are very reluctant to permit surveys for Sensitive species, due to a perceived fear of unknown controls or constraints that could arise should Sensitive species be detected and subsequently listed as Threatened or Endangered. There is thus a continuing need for public outreach, cooperative surveys and collaborative planning to ensure the viability of these important wetland systems is maintained in the long term.

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